



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Bladder Cancer

If you've been diagnosed with bladder cancer, you and your doctor will need to work closely together to optimize your treatment and help you take control of your symptoms. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Hematuria	Hematuria is when you have blood in your urine. In some cases, this will make the urine a pink, orange, red, or brown color. In others, the blood might only be detectable with a lab test.
Urinalysis	A urinalysis is a lab test to check for substances in the urine, including blood.
Urine Cytology Test	This test is used to check for cancer cells in the urine. Doctors typically order this test if there is blood in the urine or they otherwise suspect bladder cancer.
Cystoscopy	This diagnostic procedure is done by inserting a long, thin tube with a lens and light on one end and an eyepiece on the other—an instrument called a cystoscope—into the urinary tract so that doctors can get detailed images of the lining of the urethra and bladder.
Ureteroscopy	A ureteroscopy is done by inserting a ureteroscope—a long tube with a lens and eyepiece on opposite ends, similar to a cystoscope but longer and thinner. This procedure allows doctors to get images of the kidneys and lining of the ureters that connect the kidneys to the bladder.
Intravenous Pyelogram (IVP)	An IVP is a special type of x-ray that involves injecting a contrast material into the body so that the urinary tract and kidneys show up more clearly in the image. This allows doctors to spot any issues, including tumors that might be bladder cancer.



Questions to Ask

These questions will help start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your bladder cancer.

About Symptoms

- How do you know my symptoms are related to bladder cancer and not to something else?
- Are there any warning signs I should be aware of that could signal the cancer has spread?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- What, if any, risk factors do I have for bladder cancer? Is there anything in my health history?
- Is there anything in my health history that could increase my chances of the bladder cancer spreading or coming back after treatment?

About Diagnosis

- What are the results of my cystoscopy and urine cytology test? What does that mean for my prognosis?
- What stage is the bladder cancer? Can you tell me how that affects my prognosis and treatment options?

About Treatment

- Do you recommend surgery? If so, will you need to remove the whole bladder?
- Do you recommend I receive radiation or chemotherapy? What are the pros and cons?
- Am I a good candidate for immunotherapy?
- Would you be able to recommend a good program to help me quit smoking?

About Living With Bladder Cancer

- Is there anything I can do or take to help with the pain or difficulties urinating?
- Can you recommend any coping strategies for managing lower back pain?
- Would you be able to suggest a local or online support group for people with bladder cancer?

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